

Nation

The Legend of the Old Lady



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des services sociaux de la Baie James

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Social Services of James Bay

The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of
James Bay is a Cree entity responsible for the
administration of health and social services for
all residents under its jurisdiction. This juris-
diction comprises nine Cree communities
and their surrounding territories.

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Chisasibi, Quebec J0M 1E0
Tel: (819) 855-2844 ext. 5340
Fax: (819) 855-2680
E-mail: hrngmt@cancom.net

...♦♦♦♦♦
**J
O
B
S**
...♦♦♦♦♦

WHITE EVERYWHERE



My brother,

White intruders stormed our community last night, they swept in by the air, blocked our roads, stilled our waters - what could we do but retreat into the familiarity of our homes. It was unexpected and certainly unwelcome. The great grey one in our home had to arm himself with a shovel and fight his way down the stairs this morning. It seemed like he would never reach the sanctuary of his beloved truck. Many families awakened to the realization of the aftermath of yesternights events. Oh the tribulations that our brothers to the south will not know and endure. Unlike the geese, we are bound to the land and will not leave it to these cold, ruthless intruders. We survive and will not succumb to their cruelties. We do not take this opportunity, like the earth to sleep and renew itself - instead we thrive upon the chance to stand up against the seemingly endless onslaughts. One of these intruders seemed so harmless at first but then it decided to bring more of its kind. It soon surrounded us and took the land. We wait for time means nothing to us, we know the truth that it is not the first time we have encountered this affrontation and it will not be the last. So be it that another sun will rise that will bring light and warmth to our hearts. Take heed and remain strong in your village for should these intruders come to you, they will seek to dominate your lives but the seasons and tide will change and you will persevere.

byAnonomouse

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ON THE COVER

Cutting Wood at the
Mistissini CSB Camp

Photographer: Will Nicholls
Cover Design: ANNETTE WABIE

Lead us not to Temptation Island

Imagine you and your significant partner with a dozen other couples stranded on a deserted island with only your wits and piety to preserve yourself and your sanities. This sounds like Temptation Island to me and guess what, Crees and many other indigenous peoples around the world have been in this situation for many centuries! This type of scenario is old hat for us kind folks and the idea of being stranded does not seem to imply that all kinds of shenanigans could happen the moment your back is turned on your partner or on you for that matter. Perhaps it's the level of danger such as scorpions and sharks and other dangerous animals, but heck, the only real danger is infidelity (even though in the real show everyone's single).

Imagine, creating our own show with the participants stranded on one of our own disputed offshore islands. What kind of temptations could occur? Hey, that's my fish you're chomping on or, care for some muktuk anyone? How about fresh mussels or seagull egg h'or d'oeuvres. I think that the lucky survivors would probably gain weight and come back healthier than when they first embarked out to the semi-frigid open waters of James Bay.

The only real dangers would be in the occasional marauding polar bear or upset arctic tern but I could see people becoming light-headed after losing a few pints of blood to the few million voracious black flies and mosquitoes that tend to come out on nice days. Everyone could help to shape a raft out of all the driftwood and sail anywhere they want but who would want to leave paradise?

Perhaps it's the thing of the day when people seem to get off on voyeurism and betting who's going to sleep with who and who will retaliate in return? Indigenous people have been doing this living in harmony stuff since time immemorial and only when the missionaries and religion came by (and the standard proper position) did people realize that they had it good in the old days.

If pious standards got in the way of television when it was first invented, there would be no more soap operas to drool over, just all my congregation quietly minding their own business. Hoooweee, what would we do during those long day lit hours when washing dishes or doing laundry just doesn't cut it in the excitement field. Even BINGO would seem hazardous to your state of mind and pocketbook and quite sinful I must add.

We should also have some kind of show like Maury Povich or Jerry Springer. Can you imagine the topics? He slept by himself last night in the tent leaving me home alone. What did he do for excitement? People could fight over who shot that lone goose during the spring, on stage, no less. Or...how about, he'd rather be with his hunting companions with me, what does go on in that blind of theirs? Or age old mystery topics like, why do women always go to the bathroom or outhouse in pairs...what do they do or talk about? Find out live on stage on the Cree Funny Business show, coming to a TV screen in your home.

It's funny how we tend to (as good people) relish in the thought of your neighbour being naughtier than you, but secretly wish that it was you who was in the limelight and the topic at the tip of everyone's tongue. I think that we could have a field day with the shenanigans of our local and regional politicians and have everything bared out in the open, live on TV. I'm sure there would be quite a few expletives to lend to the titillation and humility one must bear when the barbs come out, especially from that nice girl (or man) who claimed to be the lover or girlfriend (boyfriend) of Mr. You Know Who. And was dumped after the meeting was over.

I wanna be a bouncer on one of those shows or stranded on an island where I could show off my survival skills. No one's gonna boot me off and get away with it. Viva trash videos, man. It's the wave of the future.

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Nation

The worst day of the year...

We present two accounts by Waswanipi Crees on their residential school experiences.

The Nation: Which residential school did you go to?

Lily Gull Sutherland: Shingwauk Residential School in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

For how many years?

I think nine years, when I started in Kindergarten to Grade 8. During high school we boarded in various homes in Sault. Some are like family, where my sister Jackie and I lived, and to this day we keep in touch.

What was it like leaving your family?

Well, you must understand that it was very heartbreaking at the age of 6 when you were separated from your loved ones. It was very sad because the bond was broken and I couldn't be with my beloved parents while I grew up during those years.

We saw them only 2 1/2 months of each year during residential school years. It was so awful. It broke my heart causing loneliness and despair at such a young age.

Was it hard for your parents?

Definitely. It was the worst day of the year. I could see it in their faces, it was very difficult for them. Even answering this question hurts to this day. I know the so-called system affected their lives. It did something to their hearts.

I remember at such a young age that they were trying to be accepting of this situation. I knew and understood that they did not want to let us go. I can still see the troubled faces of many parents to this day in my mind.

I can just see the hopeless situation when that Indian agent came to Waswanipi.

Do you think it affected your later life?

Of course it affected my life. Very much so. It affected my relationship with people. It was distressful from mental pain of hurtful memories.

continued on page 9



CLASS ACTION BREWING ON REZ SCHOOLS

A group of Crees in Waswanipi is hoping to spearhead the first class-action lawsuit in Quebec on Native residential schools.

And they have the support of the Grand Council of the Crees, which is offering to coordinate any Cree residential-school suit.

That would make it the first residential-school court action in Canada sponsored by a First Nations government.

"We have agreed to back anyone who may come forward," said Bill Namagoose, executive director of the Grand Council.

"The problem is we never had anyone to come forward. The only thing we were lacking was a client."

The community of Waswanipi is meeting on March 19 to discuss residential schools and the idea of a lawsuit.

John is one of several residential-school survivors in Waswanipi who think it's time to go to court.

He was living in the bush as a young boy when his parents were forced to send him away.

"It never leaves me. I never talked to my wife about it. It wasn't easy, those years. I still live it today like it was yesterday," said John, 36, who is a full-time trapper and now has four kids. He doesn't want his full name used at this stage.

Like many kids from Waswanipi, Mistissini and Ouje-Bougoumou, John was sent to live in a residence for Native kids in La Tuque. He attended a French-language public school in the town.

John and his six brothers and sisters would spend nine months of the year at the residence, coming home only for Christmas.

It was John's first encounter with white people. It was also his first experience of physical punishment, which his parents never used on their children.

"We used to get hit with a ruler or a belt. Sometimes I couldn't sit because it hurt. Sometimes they would put you against a desk and you bow down and they hit you," said John.

One instructor used to throw his boot at the children, he said.

"I'll tell you one thing — I always think about this, what happened at the school. I always think about it, but I keep it inside. I'll tell you another thing — it helps when I go in the bush."

Later in life, John tried to forget by abusing alcohol: "It was the only way I could stop thinking about it."

He got that problem under control, but is still haunted by his childhood separation from his parents. John was so homesick he didn't want to learn and still can't write.

John also passed on a few words from his dad Isaac. "I wasn't too happy when they took my kids away," Isaac said. "I left my kids' things the way they were (in our camp). That was the hard part — seeing those reminders of the kids."

"We didn't know what was going on with them when they were gone. We were worried. I used to cry, not only when they left, but after. It was the worst day of my life, the first day they left."

Paul Gull, chief of Waswanipi, said his community still feels the scars from the residential schools. "There are a lot of social impacts related to that," he said.

by Alex Roslin

UPDATE ON THE SITUATION OF ABRAHAM KAWAPIT AND HIS FAMILY AS OF FEBRUARY 2001

On October 29, 2000, Abraham Kawapit, suffered a very serious neck injury when he fell down the steps of his home. Abraham is now a quadriplegic, meaning that he is paralyzed from the neck down. He is married and has one daughter.

During the first two months following his accident, Abraham received medical attention in the Surgical Intensive Care Unit of the Montreal General Hospital. During this time he was totally dependent on special machines to keep his heart and respiratory system at a minimally acceptable level.

On December 12, 2000 he was transferred to the Sacré Coeur Hospital, which specializes in treating patients with spinal cord injuries.

On January 30, 2001 he was transferred to the Montreal Rehabilitation Institute at 6300 Darlington. The original prognosis of the medical specialists taking care of Abraham was that he might never return home. Today, Abraham is doing much better than what the doctors had expected and he no longer needs the special machines. However, it is still not clear how far Abraham's recuperation will go.

In consideration of the importance of being by his side, the whole Kawapit family took a trip in December 2000 to visit Abraham in Montreal, with interim financing provided by the WFN Corporation. In total, seventeen family members took this trip and the cost of the travel was twice as high than expected due to the high cost of air travel. Of the nine Cree communities, Whapmagoostui is the only community that is totally dependent on air travel.

Since Abraham's accident, his family has had no source of family income. Because his wife and child want to be close to him at all times, they have not been able to take full advantage of

the boarding home services provided by the Cree Health Board. She has had to rent an apartment in close proximity to the hospitals where her husband is being treated. The members of the Kawapit family have had to also provide financial support through local fundraising and from personal donations to Abraham's wife, Madeleine and 9-year-old daughter Kayleigh.

The total cost of travel of the family members, living expenses for Abraham's wife and child, and other unexpected costs has come up to \$32,015.81. Through local fundraising and donations the Kawapit family has received a little over \$15,000.00. These funds were used to pay the WFN Corporation account and other ongoing expenses.

Since it is certain that they will only be able to raise a partial sum of the funds needed for their expenses, the Kawapit Family would very much appreciate any financial assistance from any source to pay off their account, and to continue providing financial support to Abraham's family.

Should you be willing to help the Kawapit family, you can send your donations directly to the WFN Band Corporation to the care of Anne Kawapit, Finance officer and mention the Kawapit Family Account at this address:

Whapmagoostui First Nation Corporation,
P.O. Box 390,

Whapmagoostui, Quebec J0M 1G0

If you require further information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the following: Robbie Kawapit (office) 819-929-3384 or (home) 819-929-3362, William Kawapit Jr. (office) 819-929-3698 or (home) 819-929-3856.

On behalf of the Kawapit family, I would like to thank you in advance for your positive response to this appeal.

Chief David Masty

IN THE Mailbox

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Happy Women's Day!

On March 8, women around the world will celebrate International Women's Day. This day commemorates ordinary women and their struggle for equal rights.

In honour of the special day, we offer a brief chronology of how this observance came about:

1857: On March 8, women garment and textile workers in New York City stage a protest against inhumane working conditions, long hours and low wages. The marchers are attacked and dispersed by police. Two years later, again in March, these women form their first union.

1908: On March 8, 15,000 women march through New York City demanding shorter hours, better pay, voting rights and an end to child labour. They adopt the slogan "Bread and Roses," with bread symbolizing economic security and roses a better quality of life. In May, the Socialist Party of America designates the last Sunday in February for the observance of National Women's Day.

1909: The first National Women's Day is observed across the United States on February 28. Soon, women in Europe begin celebrating Women's Day on the last Sunday of February.

1911: On March 25, more than 140 working girls, mostly Italian and Jewish immigrants, die in the tragic Triangle Fire, an event that will have a far-reaching effect on labour legislation in the U.S.

1917: Russian women call for a strike on February 23 for "bread and peace," protesting against poor living conditions and food shortages. This date, the last Sunday of the month according to the Julian calendar then in use in Russia, falls on March 8 on the Georgian calendar, widely used in most European countries and in the Americas.

1977: In December, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopts a resolution proclaiming a UN Day for Women's Rights and International Peace to be observed by member states, in accordance with their historical and national traditions.



MILL CLOSING PROMPTS FINANCIAL WORRIES

Thirty Waswanipi residents are drawing Employment Insurance after the Nabakatuk sawmill temporarily shut its doors last month.

The closing has renewed alarm in the community about the cost of keeping the four-year-old sawmill open.

"(The employees) took it pretty well. They understand we had no choice but to close," said Peter Gull, a member of Nabakatuk's board of directors.

"It's the price of wood — it's really gone down. It's costing us more to produce it than we could sell it for, so we were going into debt," he explained.

Gull is also vice-president of Mishtuk Corp., the Waswanipi band's logging firm, which jointly owns the mill along with the forestry giant Domtar Inc.

It's not clear how long the mill will be closed. "I'm not really sure," said Gull. "It may be one month, maybe more."

Nabakatuk has run a deficit ever since it opened in June 1997, losing \$2 million in its first 10 months of operations.

The 10-month loss was almost two times higher than projected.

When the sawmill was first proposed, many residents were worried it would be a financial drain on the community. Last month's closing is renewing these concerns.

Waswanipi Chief Paul Gull estimated the band has sunk \$2.2 million into the sawmill since it opened. Plus, Mishtuk owes the band another \$800,000 for stumpage fees. Mishtuk's logging operations supply the wood processed by Nabakatuk.

"We're trying to come up

with control measures over the long-term," said the chief. "We're trying to make sure we get the money owing to us, instead of bickering over it every other day."

Chief Gull said that at a certain point, the band can no longer sink funds into the money-losing sawmill.

"We're under financial restraint," he said. "(Bailing out the sawmill) has an impact on our funding."

Paul Gull said the sawmill was closed for two reasons: falling wood prices and a lack of wood. Mishtuk has been forced to cut in Category I land to supply the mill.

"We don't have enough wood to operate. It will not be feasible with the amount of wood we get," said Gull.

Waswanipi residents say the closing of the sawmill is having ripple effects through the community, as businesses and families that depend on it feel the effects.

"It's had an economic and social impact in the community," said the chief.

Peter Gull is optimistic about the mill's future, saying wood prices are climbing and that the mill isn't losing as much money as in its first 10 months of operations. He said there was a "small loss" last year again, but wouldn't say how much, saying he couldn't remember.

He also denied the sawmill has a lack of wood: "We could have kept going. We had the timber supply." Gull predicted the mill will turn a profit after a coming injection of \$3 million for new equipment under an agreement with the province.

The mill's acting director-general, Georges Pagé, didn't return our call.

by Alex Roslin



NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

Conseil Régional
de Développement
de la Baie-James

FOREST RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM PART II

NEW PROJECT SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The deadline for submitting projects to the management units of the ministère des Ressources naturelles (MRN) and Conseil régional de développement de la Baie-James (CRDBJ) for the first 2001-2002 project prioritization session is **March 23, 2001**. Submission date for FRDP projects has been postponed 28 days in order to allow project proponents to present their projects. It is noteworthy that **March 23, 2001** should be considered as an objective; by no means does it constitute a cut-off date useful in justifying non-acceptance of new projects. Projects submitted to the MRN after **April 6, 2001**, will be studied in the course of a subsequent prioritization session.

Organizations that wish to submit projects can get information and application forms from officials of the MRN directorate of their respective territory.

• Mr. Martin Girard	(418) 748-2647	Chibougamau Management Unit
• Mr. Richard Polisier	(418) 755-4838	Quéville Management Unit
• Mr. Richard Thibeault	(418) 444-5238	Harricana Management Unit
• Mrs. Jacinthe Châteauevert	(819) 339-7521	Lac Abitibi Management Unit

This MRN Program aims to foster integrated resource development, increase forest production, stimulate community development and encourage funding sharing between the government, forest industry and stakeholders concerned.

The CRDBJ and the above partners have been involved in the program for many years and have contributed to its management. Wildlife, recreational, silvicultural, educational and environmental activities can be conducted under part II of the program, and this on private and public forests.

PROJECT SUBMISSION CALENDAR FRDP PART II

2001-2002 FISCAL YEAR

	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE
1. Preparation of application for funding		→ 23			
2. Local support application (if applicable)		→ 23			
3. Commitment by organization for project maintenance		→ 23			
4. Municipal support application		→ 23			
5. Submission of following documents to MRN and CRDBJ • application for funding • resolution by local council • municipal order			→ 6		
6. CRDBJ prioritization session and notice to project proponents			→ 18		
7. Confirmation to CRDBJ re subsidy consent					→ 15

The days of the Indian prisons

continued from page 5

I did not trust people because I was afraid I would be separated from my loved ones again. It affected my relationship in later life. I had believed and understood as a young girl before being taken away that there were good relationships all around, but that was broken. They changed my life. How can people twist people's minds like that?

To this day, I am still relearning about our traditions from our Elders. All that time lost to learn another lifestyle which was not yours to begin with.

If I sound bitter I am entitled to feel like that. It is because I did not want to be taken away.

What impacts have residential schools had on the community of Waswanipi?

It impacted on our parenting skills. We weren't bringing up our children the way our parents brought us up.

My parents never hit me, but I remember getting strapped a few times in residential school. We grew up without our parents for long periods of time.

The old ways were forgotten and many of us were not aware of or forgot the spiritual and traditional ways. In school, this was instilled in our brains that we had heathen ways.

Can you imagine?!!

I believe alcohol and drugs were an escape to forget the torment of physical, sexual, mental, spiritual and emotional abuse during the time spent in residential schools.

This abuse in some people caused them to become abusive themselves. So there is plenty of healing to be done as individuals, as families, as a community and as a Nation. You have to believe the nine years had an impact on my life. Some of our people choose the traditional healing as I did.

During one of the interviews with Don Wilshire, I mention these things because he is writing a book about residential school students.

My sister stated to me one day that "the best way to break up a nation is to break up a family." She understands how I feel.



by Paul Dixon

STILL, to this day, it's hard for me to fully comprehend why — let alone believe that — not only one but two residential schools would be part of my life in this world.

I am very grateful to have come through alive in these "Indian prisons" that took people's lives for granted. And as humans later on in life, we find out some things in life can affect us more deeply than others and for eternity.

I was a former student of these residential schools in the time they were just starting to close them down. So I guess I just got transferred to another residential school, so as to "kill every little Indian left in me." (I would like to think I was a tough nut to crack.)

I know for sure that some former students of these residential schools will never come forward to acknowledge or admit that these residential schools did ever exist. I do not blame them. Who would want to relive horrible stories or reveal to the world (which does not care) or to their new and large families, deep, dark secrets of the past?

As one person put it to me in an angry tone, why now! All this time, I had lived only to "forget." I have a friend, a former student of the residential schools, who is in a psychiatric ward today. He and many others like him will never come home to our villages. They will always remain in the big cities for the rest of their lives.

I found out also some former students of these residential schools did not want to even come home in the summer. Why?

For me, I had never wanted to leave home in the first place. The only thing that got me through the residential school was looking forward to going home. Even when I was going to residential school, I tried several times to escape and run home, but to no avail. It was just too far away.

But there are "victory stories" of former students who made it all the way home, eating whatever they could find on the way. And there are sad stories too, to watch a friend die; these are not my stories.

There are seven siblings in our family. Four speak French fluently and three English only, and we have one common language, Cree taught to us by our mother.

I guess it all depended on which residential school they could stick you in the fastest. While we were attending these residential schools, when a family member passed away, we were not told right away, let alone allowed to go home for the funeral. Sometimes the older students were forced to relay the message(s) to us.

Physical and sexual abuse was rampant in these residential schools, perpetuated by people or persons who ran these schools. Even if these perpetrators were caught, they were just moved on

I tried several times to escape and run home, but to no avail. It was just too far away.

to other residential schools to continue on whatever they were doing before.

I heard that one perpetrator went to eight different residential schools sexually and physically abusing children.

For me, fear and bewilderment are real, to know a country can commit or allow such sins and crimes of this nature to happen in establishments they ran and to have turned a blind eye. Also to a certain extent, not wanting to acknowledge it ever happened, the era of the residential school days in this province.

I will not blame former students of the residential schools if they consider or not a lawsuit(s) against the residential schools and the people who ran them.

In life, I want to move on. I do not want to live in the past, but nobody should be left off the hook that easy.

Told by John
Petagumskum Sr.

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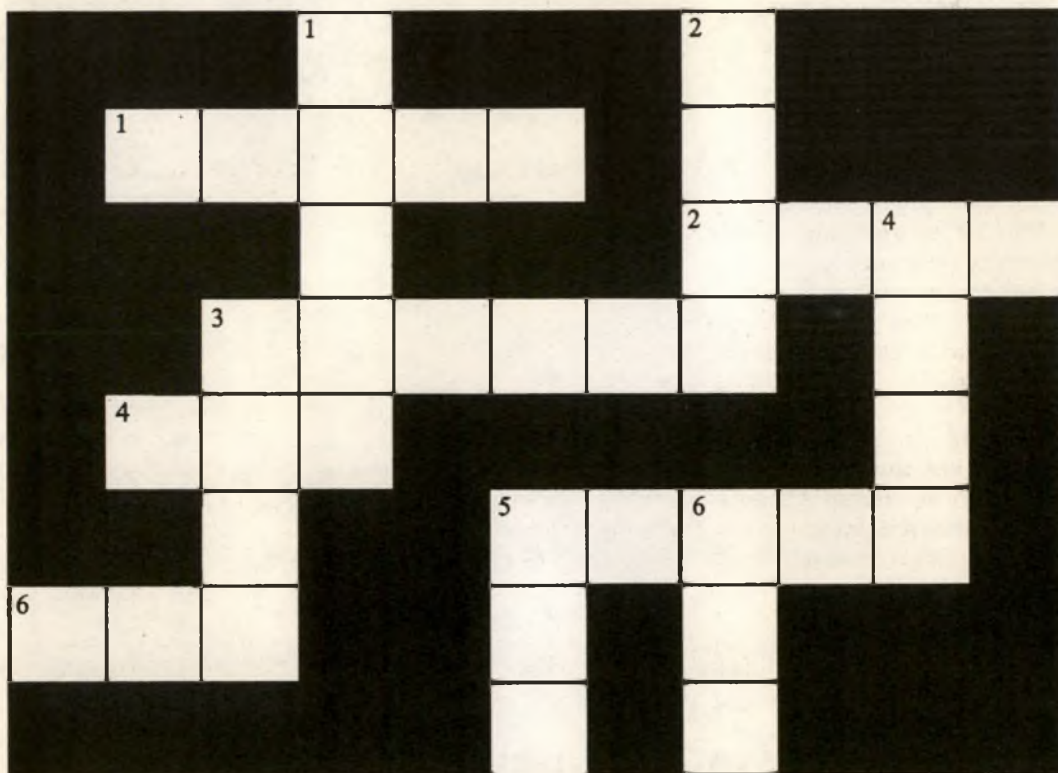
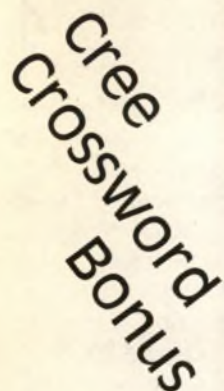


The old woman left to meet the young man upon his arrival. She had a plan. She planned to make herself visible. She lifted her ragged clothing and stuck out her behind in the direction

[illegible]

The old woman realized that her daughters had been killed. The enraged old cannibal woman shouted, "Younger brother, let's have a fight." He hollered back from their lodge, "Ok. Come fight me." The old cannibal woman came hobbling to the young man's lodge and she fell into the lodge as she got to the entrance. The man swiftly clubbed her, breaking her arms and legs. The old woman laid on the floor of the lodge and couldn't move. He told Kuchishwaakin, "Kuchishwaakin, do to her what she did to you." Without hesitating, Kuchishwaakin spliced the old woman's skin and commented, "You do have a thick layer of fat under your skin." The man said, "Cut a piece off her and feed her. See what she does. See if she's gone mad." Kuchishwaakin did what he was told to do. As the old woman began to chew on her own flesh, she said, "I don't think anything wrong will happen if I eat my own flesh." The man said, "Club her. There is no use saving her." The three women were all dead now. That is the legend that was told.

For a moment, there was silence. Then the man whispered to his wife to make their baby cry. She twisted the baby's ear and the baby began to cry. The old woman called out for her daughters to bring the child alive before her helping spirits killed the baby. But no one replied because her daughters were already dead. Then the man called out, "Older sister, come get him yourself." The old woman was surprised to hear the man. She asked, "Younger brother, are you still alive?" He answered, "I'm still here. There's nothing wrong with me." The old woman was puzzled and said, "How come the busting of the testicles didn't work?" And the man replied, "That's because I cut off your power."

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(Answers in the next issue so you don't cheat.
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Everything you should know about your public auto insurance plan

Why a public plan?

Before 1978, compensation was based on the notion of responsibility. To get compensation, you had to sue the person who caused the accident. This entailed a number of inconveniences:

- One out of four people were never compensated
- Innocent victims were never totally compensated for their financial losses
- Payments were long in coming—it took 2 to 10 years for final settlements to be made
- People had to pay for their own rehabilitation.

What is its role?

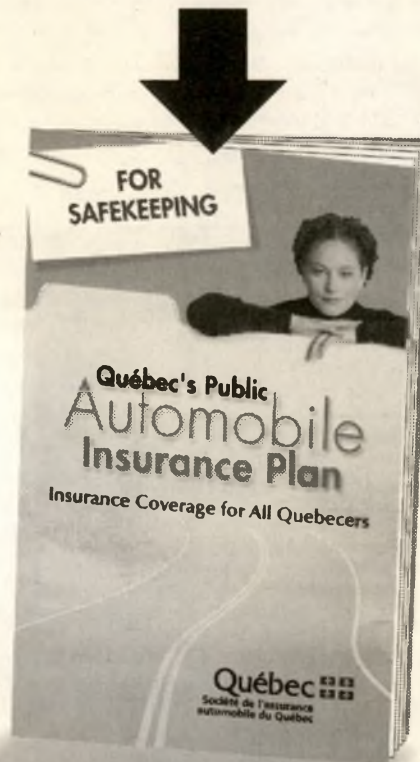
The public auto insurance plan is there to compensate the injured parties—not punish them. It should not be confused with the Criminal Code or the Highway Safety Code—laws that punish and penalize.

Does this insurance protect me?

Everyone is protected without exception—drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. The insurance covers all 7.3 million Quebecers here and around the world.

What would be the consequences if people had the right to sue?

No compensation could be paid to injured parties before determining who caused the accident. This would be a step back to the days of long, costly trials when the families of individuals being sued were hit hard financially. If lawsuits were allowed, drivers could have to buy additional insurance to protect themselves.



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first.

Making Tracks

by Brian Zelnicker



SHIRLEY CHEECHOO

Filmmaker Shirley Cheechoo is not the easiest person to track down these days. First I tried a phone number in Utah where, having disturbed someone's vacation, I was informed that they had never heard of Shirley Cheechoo. I then tried a number in Ontario, only to connect with an answering machine. Another call, this time to her manager's office in Toronto, turned into yet another encounter with an answering machine. Then came word that she was in Chisasibi, so I tried her there and the timing was all wrong.

Why was I trying to track this woman down, you may well be wondering. Does she owe me a large sum of money? Is she on the FBI's most wanted list? Is she my long lost mother? The answers are no, no, and definitely not. Shirley Cheechoo is the producer, writer, and director of *Tracks In The Snow*, a documentary film that recently showed in the renowned Sundance film festival in Park City, Utah.

Filmed on digital video, *Tracks In The Snow* chronicles a traditional journey into the bush undertaken by a group from Whapmagoostui. Ten students between the ages of ten and twelve, three elders, and some adults were flown out into the wilderness and walked sixty-two miles, camping for four days and four nights, back to the community. The journey gave the children a chance to learn traditional ways from the elders. As Shirley Cheechoo puts it, "they walked to bridge the gap between the past and the present."

The video portrays the bush as a traditional classroom. There is a great deal to be learned at school, but we see that there is much that cannot be taught within the confines of four walls. What better place to educate children about traditional hunting, fishing, and survival skills than on the very soil where these skills are intended to be used. "Out on the land, the teaching starts the minute the children awake and continues until it is time for bed," Isaac Masty explains in the early minutes of the film.

Detailed footage illustrates how camp is set up. The process shows the scattering of sapling branches and spruce boughs to make the floor, the erecting of side and top poles, the placement of canvas for the roof and walls, and finally the use of packed snow on the outside to help keep the heat inside. All members of the group got involved in making and taking down the camp, learning from elders Andrew Natachequan, Maggie Natachequan, and Sandy Masty as they went.

The kids were also shown how to set up night lines for ice-fishing. Sandy Masty taught them how to pick out a hole through the thick ice and how to set the line in such a way that it would be easy to tell if there was a fish caught the next morning. During the course of the journey, a caribou was killed in the bush and shared among everyone, just as it was done in the old days.

When the group completed the journey and arrived in Whapmagoostui they were greeted by the community. Younger children took part in a ceremony called First Snowshoe Walk, described by Robbie Matthews as a ceremony that was done, "wherever the people were, inland or along the coast. When the 'walking out' ceremony is done the children leave no tracks on the earth, but in the first snowshoe walk the children leave tracks in the snow . . . marks from their snowshoes. Now they are a part of nature."

Tracks In The Snow was commissioned by the Cree School Board, courtesy of executive producer Daisy Herodier, who has been busy on many Cree cultural projects including the compilation of a Cree dictionary, and the *Cree Spoken Here* video that aired this winter on APTN. It is hoped that the video will be a valuable educational tool, as well as a document of traditional practices. "The children are being taught Cree knowledge and a way of life that is no longer being practised," says Herodier on camera. The journey was especially significant in that the walkers were sponsored by nearby communities to raise money for research into Cree Leukoencephalopathy Syndrome.

Shirley Cheechoo's list of awards and accomplishments is extensive and impressive. It would be easier to list what she hasn't done. Shirley lives on Manitoulin Island with her husband Blake Debassige, where they are both artists in residence at the Kasheese Studios Art Gallery. As a visual artist, Shirley works with acrylic, oils and mixed medium on canvas and paper, stained glass, and serigraph prints. Her media credits include acting, writing, directing and producing for stage, film, television, and radio. I don't know how she does it, but she somehow squeezes



twenty five hours out of a day, not to mention eight days out of a week.

Shirley first garnered national recognition in the theater back in 1992 for her play *Path With No Mocassins*. She made her debut as a film director with the acclaimed short film *Silent Tears*, which won Best Dramatic Short at film festivals in Edmonton, Nebraska, San Francisco and Santa Fe, was shown at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival, and won the Telefilm Canada/Television Northern Canada Award for Best Canadian Aboriginal Language Television Program. Shirley also wrote, produced, directed, and acted in the feature length film *Backroads*. As if all this wasn't enough, she is the founder of the De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig theater group, where celebrated actors like Gary Farmer and Graham Greene have been involved.

Tracks In The Snow has kept Shirley Cheechoo busy well past the end of production. The film has taken her to festivals in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, San Francisco, Utah, and New York. The frequent flyer miles must be building up. Having finally caught up with Shirley via the telephone, I talked to her, all too briefly, about independent filmmaking and her experience filming up in Whapmagoostui.

A film like this can stand up over time as an important cultural artifact, did this occur to you while you were filming?

I just do the work and hope that one person will see it. It was more interesting for me to make as my own personal experience.

In terms of your own experience, you mentioned in the film that you were uncomfortable with your fluency in the Cree language.

I thought of myself as fluent in Cree before I did the film. You think you're fluent and then you find that you don't know what they're saying. I wish I'd known more about my language, but there were so many times that I didn't know what they were saying. There were many times that I needed explanations for words that I didn't know.

Both your husband and your son worked on this project, is filmmaking becoming a family affair for you?

I needed to find a D.P. (director of photography) in just one week and the only person available was my son (Nano Debassige).

He also edited the film. My husband (Blake Debassige) basically gets involved with the music.

What do you do when you're not making films?

We teach art, drama, and video in Wemindji, Chisasibi, and Whapmagoostui.

Do you have another film project lined up?

I'm working on another one hour drama for television, it's called *Sacrifice*. I'm just trying to raise money for it right now. We're shooting it up in Wemindji. The story is about a little girl who gets lost in the bush, at a fishing camp.

What about the festival circuit?

I shot a half hour video in Great Whale, called *Dancing River*. It's about people canoeing the Great Whale river and about the importance of the river to the local people. It will be premiering at a festival in St. Petersburg, Florida on March 1st.

If past performance is anything to go by, we can expect to see much more from Shirley Cheechoo. This dynamic and multi-talented artist is leaving deep tracks of her own on the Cree cultural landscape.



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ABORIGINAL EQUALITY AND ALL THAT

by Will Nicholls

In early January, University of Toronto law professor Patrick Macklem released a book called *Indigenous Difference and the Constitution of Canada*. This book talks about the legacy of European colonization in Canada and says that the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada have a unique constitutional relationship with the State. As an Aboriginal many have heard the cries of unfairness when non-Natives say that special recognition is given when "Aboriginal people don't pay tax" or are "allowed to hunt or fish out of season." Macklem states that the unique relationship between First Nations and the Canadian State is required by fundamental principles of justice and he looks at equality in a very different light than just "all citizens must be treated the same way."

The book at times is dry in the sense that it contains great amounts of information that is ultimately useful to anyone concerned with Aboriginal rights. Pouring through it is difficult but ultimately rewarding. The reasoning is concise, logical and definitely not what the Reform crowd wants to hear given Macklem's reputation as a constitutional lawyer and scholar.

Macklem, like the Cree-Naskapi Commission, sees the need for an independent tribunal to oversee treaty negotiations and implementation. He writes, "an independent tribunal is necessary to eliminate the conflict-of-interest currently confronting the federal government when it acts as the sole adjudicator of comprehensive and specific claims." He says that section 35(1) imposes positive obligations on the government to respect, promote and fulfill Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Not only would I recommend this book, but I would say it should be required reading for Aboriginal leadership. It just might clear up a few things and give them some ammunition the next time they sit down with either the provincial or federal governments.

The Nation: Could you give us an overview of the book?

Macklem: I'd love to. The project, as a whole, was to try to explain why certain social and historical facts distinguish First Nations from other communities within Canada. It was designed to speak to two perspectives. There are those who believe historical and social facts don't possess constitutional significance. These people believe that Aboriginal people are the same

as other non-Aboriginal people. That they are the same and shouldn't have a unique constitutional relationship between Aboriginal People and the State. There are crass versions of this and more sophisticated versions. The other perspective is quite different and they believe that the constitution should say nothing and shouldn't govern First Nations. That First Nations shouldn't be a part of the Constitution. Sovereignty has been denied but it continues to exist. That First Nations should be under international law instead. It was designed to speak to these two very different audiences. It was to try to persuade these audiences that the Constitution has something important to say about Aboriginal people. That Aboriginal people enjoy a unique relationship with the State that non-Aboriginal people do not enjoy. That's the basic point.

It was to try to give an account of Aboriginal territorial relationships, sovereignty, the treaty process and Aboriginal cultural differences. To try to give an account of those social and political realities in a way that shows the Constitutional consequences.

I argue that the consequences are that the Constitution recognizes rights to self-government, territorial rights, cultural rights and an on-going treaty process with the Canadian State.

I explore the nature and scope of those rights.

You talked about equality in it. You say there is equality even though there are differences?

Yes, in part I try to do that to construct a common language by which we might be able to talk about first nations relationships to Canada. It's my belief that First Nations seek a type of equality with other Canadians. It isn't necessarily the type of equality that other Canadians desire of First Nations. There are equality claims being advanced on both sides in these types of disputes but the nature of those claims differ quite dramatically. So the task was to try to sort how we might be able to understand First Nations relationships to Canada through equality in an interesting way. For example, Aboriginal territorial rights and Aboriginal title can be and ought to be in part understood in terms of Aboriginal Peoples attaining a measure of equality in Canadian property law. That is, original peoples in the past have not been treated equally in Canadian Prop-

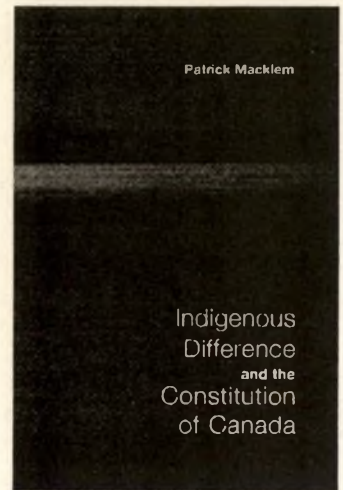
erty Law. Canadian Property Law did not recognize the prior occupancy of First Nations but it did recognize prior occupancy in non-Aboriginal settings. So treating Aboriginal people equally in property law means recognizing Aboriginal title.

And there's also an equality claim built into Aboriginal rights to self-government that I think helps us understand the significance of those rights. First Nations were not treated as equals to European nations during colonization. Their sovereignty wasn't recognized while European sovereignty was. We know the consequences of that. In part they include a distribution of sovereignty under Canadian law that until recently had not included Aboriginal sovereignty. So I argue that equality requires recognizing a measure of Aboriginal sovereignty within the Canadian constitutional order.

In terms of culture I try to give an account of Aboriginal cultural rights through equality and language as well. That is, that Aboriginal cultures are threatened by forces of assimilation. In order to protect against these forces they need to be placed on an equal footing as non-Aboriginal cultures. In order to achieve that, Aboriginal cultural rights should be recognized by the Constitution.

My analysis of the treaty process highlights the claims of equality. First Nations have to be treated as equals. There has to be a nation-to-nation relationship.

There are all sorts of appeals to the value of equality in the notion that First Nations ought to enjoy a unique constitutional relationship with Canada. Equality doesn't always mean similarity or similar treatment. Equality very often means differential treatment and it ought to mean



INFORMATION ON THE FIREARMS LAW FOR CREE HUNTERS

The Grand Council of the Crees and the Cree Trappers' Association are working together to protect Cree rights and promote firearms safety.

The Grand Council is examining all of the legal and administrative issues. The Grand Council agrees with the promotion of gun safety, however, we cannot accept that the costs of the new firearms legislation (course costs, licensing fees, etc.) be assumed by the Cree Nation or Cree hunters individually. However, in order for individuals to avoid prosecution, we strongly recommend that, when feasible, Cree hunters comply with the existing law while the Grand Council continues discussions with governments to settle these outstanding issues. We ask the Cree hunters to work with the CTA in this regard.

Hopefully, funding will be forthcoming from the governments for such purpose. We recommend that you, however, take the firearms safety course, if available.

The CTA will be available to provide insofar as funding is available:

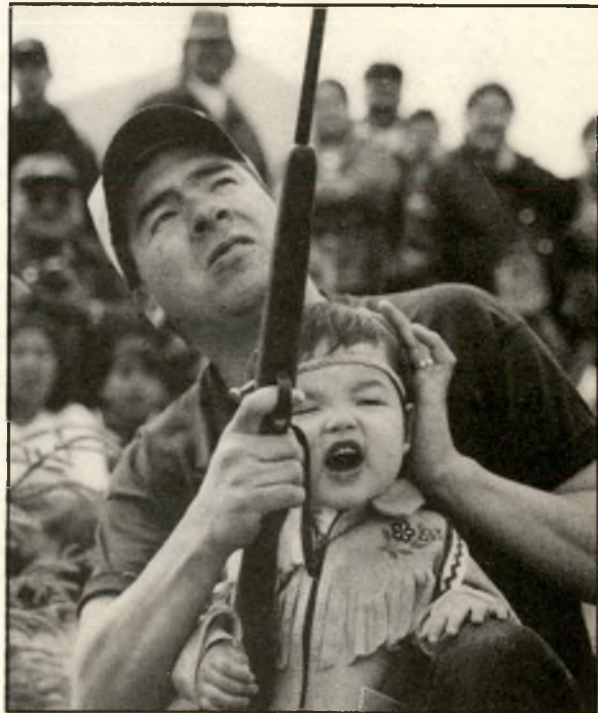
- 1) Firearms safety courses;
- 2) Assistance with filling-out application forms for acquisition and possession of firearms;
- 3) Assistance with firearms registration.

At the present time you need to have any one of the following cards to buy ammunition:

- 1) A temporary possession only license (good only until 31 June 2001);
- 2) A possession only license;
- 3) An acquisition and possession license;
- 4) A valid Firearms Acquisition Certificate (FAC).



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GRAND COUNCIL OF THE CREES (EYYOU ASTCHEE)
GRAND CONSEIL DES CRIS (EYYOU ASTCHEE)



Some people have been told that a Band Identification card will be accepted to buy ammunition. We have found that many stores will not accept this form of identification.

We recommend that you take the Firearms Safety Course if it is available to you, and obtain the proper license.

If you are unable to buy ammunition, or are refused service in a store, or need more information, please contact your CTA office.

Have a good and safe hunt.

Grand Chief Dr. Ted Moses

CTA President Mr. Thomas Coon



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CREE REGIONAL AUTHORITY
ADMINISTRATION RÉGIONALE CRÉ

that in the context of Aboriginal Peoples. In order to achieve equality we treat different people differently all the time. So differential treatment isn't inconsistent with equality. In many cases equality requires differential treatment. There's more to equality than what opponents of Aboriginal treaty rights would suggest. In fact equality works to support Aboriginal treaty rights in the Constitution.

That's quite different from what the Reform Party would say.

Yes, I think to that extent the Reform Party is wrong. Equality is a much more complex idea than one that simply mandates that everybody, whatever their circumstances, be treated the same. This is speaking to and against the Reform Party's agenda for sure. It's using in part their own words and categories and telling them they can't claim equality as their value. That Aboriginal self-government and territorial claims aren't antithetical to notions of equality. In fact they are consistent.

What are some of the conclusions or ideas you ended with in your book?

The main direction of the latter chapters of the book is to say that Aboriginal and treaty rights, on their own, require more than State inaction. They require positive action by the State. They require the State to establish robust treaty processes that enable the negotiation and renovation of treaties. That would enable First Nations to re-obtain much more authority over much more territory. I argue that they require the Government to establish a freestanding tribunal that would be responsible for overseeing comprehensive and specific claims and to hold parties to a treaty relationship to fulfill obligations and negotiate in good faith. The tribunal would have to oversee the negotiations so that occurs. The tribunal would have the authority to deal with disputes that come out of the negotiation processes and to impose binding settlements if necessary. It would be less of a court-like structure and more of an administrative tribunal, a specialized agency with the power to hold the parties to negotiations and impose positive obligations on them to negotiate. I understand the AFN is in negotiations with the federal government to try to establish this type of tribunal but I'll bet my version of it is somewhat more robust than what the federal government is likely to contemplate.

The point is that Aboriginal and treaty rights do impose positive obligations and

here they are: fair treaty processes, substantive negotiating obligations on the parties, the need to provide First Nations with much more territory and self-governing authority than they currently have now and the like.

In the book you talked about the Van der Peet court case (says an Aboriginal right is an activity that had to be an "element of a practice, custom or tradition integral to the distinctive culture of the Aboriginal group claiming the right at the time of contact." Contact meaning meeting the Europeans) and how it was flawed in three respects. When I was looking at that case it made me think about B.C., because there wasn't a pre-contact regulatory body overseeing all the different tribes in the area where trade was concerned. Even though there was trade it wasn't allowed. I felt that the court, in doing this, doesn't allow for Aboriginal culture or tribal law to go beyond what it was before contact - meaning you're freezing the culture.

I think you're right. To be fair to the court they do allow rights to evolve but you have to have this pre-contact practice from which it can evolve. But if you don't have a pre-contact practice it doesn't receive judicial protection. If a First Nation hunted before pre-contact they can hunt now in modern ways and it is protected by judicial rights. So it is frozen and they aren't but that position I try to critique because what I think is important is not whether or not there is pre-contact practice. But is the practice, pre or post, important to the viability of the culture and that's what the courts should be focusing on, not looking back in time to try to create a pre-contact category. It makes it hard though because the courts will say that means everything. That means current economic practices that bear no relation to history, so to speak. That creates its own challenges. How do you define culture in such a way that it doesn't include every conceivable social practice under the sun? I guess my answer to that is that is a good question and we have to break these things down. That we shouldn't try to build territory into culture, governance and economic practices into culture. Those kinds of concerns ought to be addressed on their own terms. There are other reasons why Aboriginal governance and limits to that come from those reasons and not this notion of culture.

It's a tough question because Aboriginal rights should not be frozen for all the

reasons we've heard about, but once you move away from that another set of challenges arises. Part of the first few chapters are dealing with part of that question and that's why I break things down into culture and territory, sovereignty and the treaty process. Obviously all of these are deeply related and there's certain amount of artificial separation happening. It doesn't separate well given that many First Nations cultures are deeply connected to territory but it's useful to separate them to see what rights make up this unique relationship with the constitution and where do they come from and how can we justify them.

You talked about Aboriginal sovereignty. How likely do you see that happening? You've talked about the inequities. You look at the resource extraction/exploitation and see no form of revenue sharing. If you're talking about sovereignty do you need a monetary base for that to happen?

There are two routes to talk about. There's the judicial route and there's the negotiated route. These work in tandem which makes the problem complicated. If I was to project or predict I would say the judiciary will take very cautious incremental steps towards recognizing an Aboriginal right of self-government, to recognize a constitutional right of self-governance, which would be the modern manifestation of Aboriginal sovereignty. So I think they'll take cautious steps, but they will take steps. It will be situation and topic specific. On the other hand, the negotiated route will take broader cuts at this.

In an ideal world the federal government would establish robust treaty processes that produce the sharing of sovereignty and the sharing of governing authority. We see it in nascent ways the Nisga Agreement, the JBNQA and in other self-government agreements or agreements that provide for some self-government or shared management. If they get the treaty processes right and if there's the political will to make it happen then those should produce agreements that share governing authority over certain matters and produce cost-sharing arrangements as well. Cost sharing and equalization is a pretty well established principle in Canadian Federalism and there's no reason why it shouldn't be extended for First Nations. In fact, it sort of is already in a way but it isn't regarded in those terms. There are lots of grants, though not enough, going out to help some First Nations build social infrastructure and that sort of thing.

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Canada



THE PERFECT HAMBURGER

BY XAVIER KATAQUAPIT

One year my dad decided to open up a restaurant. The place went through a few changes and suddenly I, along with a couple of my younger brothers, ended up running the operation.

Considering I was 17 and my two brothers were younger, the restaurant business was not exactly a natural for us. To provide only the best in fast food to the people of Attawapiskat we produced hand-cut fries. Now hand-cut fries don't drop out of the sky or grow on trees. I can recall peeling 50-pound bags of potatoes and cutting them to prepare for a day of sales. Our fresh-cut fries were always in demand but none of us boys looked forward to the chore of making them.

We also had burgers. My mom Susan produced the homemade patties (with her secret ingredients) that kept them coming back for more. On any given day, for about a year back then, I and my brothers Joe and Paul cranked out some very high-quality fast food.

We were always endeavouring to provide the perfect hamburger and some of our inventions were pretty darn good. Of course, our friends were always happy to taste-test our creations. I recall creating the onion ring burger with lettuce, tomato, handmade meat patty (with mom's secret ingredients) onion rings, mustard, relish and ketchup on a sesame seed bun.

By god we were the McKataquapits of Attawapiskat there for a while. We created all kinds of combinations. There was also the potato burger, which was a concoction of fresh-cut fries, mozzarella cheese, mom's handmade patties (with her secret ingredients), tomato, lettuce, bacon, mustard, relish and ketchup on a sesame seed bun. It was a big hit with our friends too.

We had everything going for us, with unique high-quality burgers and fresh-cut fries. To make sure we had all the bases covered our menu also featured fill-your-gut poutines, stacked high club houses, chicken fingers and chicken nuggets to die for, glorious hot dogs and even a full T-bone steak dinner with all the trimmings.

For a while we catered to early morning traffic in Attawapiskat for the person on the go. That meant eggs, fried anyway you like them, hashbrowns, toast and coffee all for one low price. Regretfully, we had to rise with the sun to serve our early birds. Now you have to remember we weren't in downtown Toronto, Winnipeg or Vancouver. We were located right in the heart of downtown Attawapiskat with a population of somewhere around 2,000 people. That fact meant we didn't exactly have a ton of people at our doorstep everyday, well not in numbers anyway.

In addition, being the generous people we Kataquapits are, we never turned a hungry soul away and anyone who ordered a basic menu got topped up with a deluxe just because it felt like the right thing to do. Our friends and family members ate like kings. I never ate so much grease in my life.

The only complication or obstacle that kept us from building an empire, based on our fabulous fast food, was the fact that we weren't making any money. Now to most entrepreneurs this would be a critical problem but to us it was merely an irritation. One thing for sure we had all the right ingredients for the perfect hamburger if not the perfect fast-food restaurant. It just didn't really matter a whole lot to us whether or not we made a bunch of money or not.

Needless to say the McKataquapit restaurant chain never did get off the ground. Still, those days of chasing the perfect hamburger were special to me. At one point it seemed as though half the community was coming through our doors during the day. We were cutting, peeling, frying, boiling and cooking as fast as we could. There were small orders, medium orders and orders for entire families. We could hardly keep up. It seemed as though our lives revolved around the bubbling grease in the fast-food fryer. At first it was only family members and close friends that got the special treatment but after a while we were topping up everybody's basic meal to the deluxe version just for the hang of it.

I wonder sometimes if it had been another time and another place would we have created the perfect hamburger? Then again maybe the perfect hamburger was one that anybody could afford.



NAHO

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL HEALTH ORGANIZATION

by Brian Zelnicker

On Friday, February 16, The Nation participated in a nationwide teleconference held by the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO). The conference, hosted by NAHO chairperson Dr. Judith Bartlett and executive director Richard Jock, was geared to provide aboriginal media from across the country with information, and to field any questions that the journalists might have.

Dr. Bartlett spoke first, explaining that NAHO was established in March, 2000 and began developing a structure and appointing members to the board that June. The first position filled was that of executive director Richard Jock. A total of 15 board members were then selected from across Canada. Though there is no direct representation at present for the James Bay Cree, there are northern representatives from AFN. It is NAHO's intention to link up with all Native groups across the country as it seeks to expand its understanding of aboriginal health issues at the national and local level.

The fledgling organization, armed with a five-year mandate and a \$28.3 million budget (estimated annual budget of 5-7 million) courtesy of Health Canada, came about as the result of wanting to address the health needs of Native people. While NAHO must report to Health Canada, the relationship will be maintained at arm's length. NAHO will however be closely linked with the Institute of Aboriginal People's Health and it is hoped that this close link will ensure that the organization's priorities are clearly reflected. There will be an ongoing process of evaluation to determine whether the program will be sustainable over a longer term.

Richard Jock outlined the key goals of the organization as follows:

- To improve and promote, through knowledge, the health of aboriginal people.
- To improve existing health programs.
- To facilitate and promote research, including areas concerning women, children, and Aboriginal people in urban areas.
- To foster the delivery of health care by improving ways to provide training and entry into the field.
- To affirm aboriginal healing practices and ensure that traditional holistic healing practices are both recognized and preserved.

Dr. Bartlett went on to emphasize that gathering and providing information, assembling solid, objective data to help in the decision making process is what the organization is focused on. NAHO is affiliated with five member organizations across Canada; the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapirisat Commission, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the Native Women's Association, and the Metis National Council. NAHO seeks to establish links and protocols with all the involved organizations through its website (NAHO.ca), national conferences, and regional gatherings to be held across the country.

For those of you expecting to see immediate results at the community level, you'll have to be patient. NAHO is not set up

as a health delivery service, but as a fact finder and policy developer. The organization maintains a long-term goal of gathering and providing information, and of collecting solid, objective data to help make informed decisions where Aboriginal health is concerned. Knowledge, rather than practice, is the key here. The organization seeks to scope out and understand what is available, how to develop new health policies, and how to contribute to positive health. "We want to know how to proceed and find facts to develop better methodology, ethics, and protocols for research," said Dr. Bartlett. She added that NAHO wants to, "prioritize research questions based on needs, not desires."

NAHO officially opened on February 19th. At this early stage they seek to leave the door open to feedback that will allow the organization to adapt to the dictates of incoming information. In other words, the organization is a work in progress that hopefully will be able to adapt itself to improve all aspects of Aboriginal health. Ultimately, NAHO wants to construct an overall health agenda for Aboriginal people by the end of its five-year agenda. It is hoped that the linking up of disparate groups will help in the sharing of knowledge and expertise. Much emphasis has been placed on learning from traditional Native healing practices. Alternative medicine stands to contribute the most to this program.

JUDY CHARTRAND'S LARD SALE



Different from all 'others'
December 2000

Judy Chartrand is an MFA student in Ceramics at the University of Regina whose work is thoughtful, satirical, sought-after, and, for the most part, sold! The National Aboriginal Achievement Foundation is proud to support Judy Chartrand and others like her who are eager to study in the arts and work toward rewarding careers as artists and performers.

Call now to see how we can support you in your arts training.

The number is **1-800-329-9780** and it's toll free.

Aboriginal organizations planning arts or cultural events may apply for assistance by sending a proposal to the Cultural Projects Program, at

THE NATIONAL ABORIGINAL ACHIEVEMENT FOUNDATION

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Phone: 416-926-0775 Fax: 416-926-7554

e-mail: naaf@istar.ca website: www.naaf.ca



THE DEADLINE FOR ALL ARTS PROGRAMS IS MARCH 31

Community celebrates youth centre opening



Elaine Dixon was the second runner-up in the Miss Waswanipi contest, held during celebrations of the opening of Waswanipi's long-awaited youth centre.

Waswanipi residents and invited dignitaries were on hand for the opening of the community's long-awaited youth centre. The official ribbon-cutting, held Feb. 15, was attended by Grand Chief Ted Moses and Quebec Native Affairs Minister Guy Chevrette.

The ceremony was followed by a banquet and a concert. Next day, the celebrations continued with a dance DJed by local spinmeisters and Montreal's MC Mario. On Feb. 17, the centre hosted a Miss Waswanipi contest and fashion show. Sarah Blacksmith won as Miss Waswanipi, followed by Marlena Otter as first runner-up and Elaine Dixon, as second runner-up. Elaine, 17, also won awards for entrepreneurship and artistic talent.

Here is the speech Elaine gave as part of the Miss Waswanipi competition, called "Willing hearts never die."

GOOD EVENING, guests of honour and to all people of Waswanipi and from out of town.

Welcome and welcome again.

My name is Elaine Louise Dixon. I represent the Cree Trappers' Association of Waswanipi. It is a privilege and I do it with pride and honour.

Today is my birthday. I am 17 years old and I have a twin brother somewhere in this beautiful building. (Happy Birthday Michael.)

I have two addresses – first, in the

bush, Windy Lake, where I grew up, and the other address is here in Waswanipi. I love school, sports and living in the bush.

And I love our new youth centre. And to the people who helped us get it, my story, "Willing hearts never die," is about you also.

Once upon a time, there was a little girl who lived in the wilderness with her two grandmothers, where life was full of love and fun and there was hunting.

My fondest memories are of my two grandmothers Sarah Dixon and Philomene Coonishish. Both were very close to me and became my first true friends.

Love and loyalty I grew to understand, soft and true, their qualities remained strong to the end, as I brushed their white hair I never knew, would be the last time.

Thinking life would remain the same forever, as children we want to grow up fast. And as we get older, we never want to let go our childhood days.

One year apart, the passing away of my grandmothers who were the centre of our lives, was hard for me to take and understand, so I cried often. Still I long to hear their voices and to hold them again.

Because love is so strong and does not want to let go, loved ones who pass

away are never really buried here on earth, but live on in our hearts.

Both of my beloved grandmothers had willing hearts and because of this believing had no boundaries. They could be alive in the winds that blow across the cold snow on a lake or in the warm breeze that whispers amongst the trees. To love is never having to say you're sorry and to cry and miss someone is only human.

"Old trees die, so young ones can grow," I often heard them say, my grandmothers before leaving this world. As a child then, I thought sticks and stones would be the only things in life to make one cry. Never knowing that tears and smiles would be part of life yet to come, because our hearts could easily be broken by loneliness.

When I cry at night, I pray not to the stars, but to the "one" who made the stars. During the day, as the geese fly by, I know my grandmothers with their smiles are looking down on them, as I look up to see the geese fly by.

Both of my grandmothers were born and raised in the wilderness. They spoke of legends and stories that belonged to this land of time where everything could speak, animals, birds, trees, rocks and even the earth.

Believing has no boundaries when we have willing hearts.

The greatest legend of all was that the earth and heavens were made in seven days only. After this, the legends say everything sang – even the rocks and the earth gave praise to the creator.

Through my grandmothers I learned that we do not have to be powerful people to have or change things in this world. We only need willing hearts.

So, whether we die young or old with willing hearts we know that there is an internal home where everybody can live happily ever-after.

In the end, I want to say good-bye for now Goo-kom, good-bye for now Chom-shom.

I know I will have children one day, I want to.

"Old trees die, so the young ones can live," they say, and as the legends and stories are passed down to us, so must we.

I would like to thank Guy Chevrette for coming to the opening of our new youth centre, and also to former Chief John Kitchen for liking my speech (story) so much. Thank you again.

CLASSIFIEDS

100- Births

Congratulations to Leigh-Ann (Gates) and John Sealhunter on the birth of their son, February 9, 2001. We wish on only the best. Take good care of your boy, love him, and just simply enjoy him. We are! Love, Mom and Dad.

101- Birthdays

We would like to say happy 20th birthday to our son our brother John-Paul Martinhunter (chis.) on September 10. have a great time on your special day and many more to come. once again Happy birthday Love always, Mom & Dad and your brothers and sisters we love you

A Birthday wish goes out to Jessica Voyageur in Chisasibi on February 17, 2001. Happy 14th Birthday. From all of us at 17 Impasse de la Roseraie, (Hull).

I would like to take this time to wish a happy 19th birthday to Jamie Moses, on march 1001. Hope your day will very special AS you are! And happy belated Valentine's day. Once more Happy Birthday and many more...! Love Always someone in Chisasibi. Luv ya & Miss ya xoxox

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one in Chisasibi. Luv ya & Miss ya xoxox

Sending all the very best birthday wishes to a wonderful friend of mine, Tomy most precious and cherished redrose. Happy Birthday! Cynthia B. May God bless you and keep you in his tender loving care. With all his love, May he comfort your heart, carry you in his arms, lead you and guide you through each and every single day, today tomorrow, now and forever, You are a blessing to my heart and to my life. From your friend, always, pour toujours, Tommyboy.

Better late than never. Happy Birthday to my buddy Sabastien Coon Come on the 20th of Feb. I did not know it was your birthday on this day, I hope that you had fun. Take care, your buddy Akian Herodier, in Eastmain.

I would like to wish a Happy Birthday to my friends Roxanne Pelchat on Feb. 7, Jennifer Labbe on Feb. 20, Lucy Snowboy on Feb. 28 and Rachel Martinhunter on March 1st. I hope you girls have a great time on your birthdays. Because you deserve it. From Lillian Martinhunter (Chisasibi)

Birthday Wishes going out to Angela Gates on February 12. You go girl...twenty years old! It is not easy for parents to let go...but looking back to your child and teen

years, you have done pretty great. We wish you the best and hope all your dreams come true. All our love, Mom & Dad.

Birthday Greetings to Edward (Ajou) Bearskin who celebrated his 18th on February 21st. Guess what! 18 is a great year to be...you make your own decisions! Make great fantastic ones and who knows, you might become a Superstar...so many possibilities! Happy Birthday All our Love, Terry, Annie, Leigh-Ann, Angela, Adam.

Happy Belated Birthday to Gilles Allan Happyjack on Feb. 15. (Take care) From Anita, Calvin, & Marina Meyaubin

I would like to wish something a HAPPY BIRTHDAY. I would like to wish my car a happy birthday on Februaury 15, 2001. You are the second best thing that every happened to me. (Besides loosing my virginity). You've taken me places that I've never seen. Even though I've treated you badly sometimes, I will never forget the day that brought us together. So, Happy 1st Birthday. Oh by the way, Happy Valentines Day, too. On March 3rd, my dad Alllan Kitchen will be celebrating his 69th birthday. I want to wish him a happy birthday. Love, Louise.

My dear mom will be celebrating her birthday on March 16th. Happy ?? Birthday. Her name is Eva Kitchen and I want to wish her a happy day! Love, Louise.

We want to wish someone special

in our lives a Happy Birthday on March 19th. We love you. Malcolm, and we will always be there for you. Love you always, Fr. me and your son Marcus. (Wask.)

Shequin Darlene Sheshamush, Who brings so much joy in to our lives will be celebrating her 3rd birthday on March 14. We hope that you will get all the brasshes, plastic disco sandals, lipsticks and eye shadows you wish for. Our family is truly blessed to have a beautiful little princess like you. With lots of love, Mom & Dad and your big bro Alex.

We Would like to wish a happy 1st birthday to our adorable son Braedan-Jay Wynne. We thank the our Creator for sending us one of his little angels to be in our care. You have enriched our lives in so many ways by your constant smiles and laughter. We love you very much. Love Mom & Dad and especially from your sister Candice Happy 1st birthday to our cousin Braedan-Jay Wynne, Be sure to give us a big piece of your cake. And try not to cry to much on your birthday party, you never know their might hot chicks at your party. Anyways have a blast on your first party. Love you very much, Shequin & Alex.

Shequin Darlene Sheshamush, Who brings so much joy in to our lives will be celebrating her 3rd birthday on March 14. We



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I would like to say happy birthday to my girlfriend in ojay , Nikita Shecapio B/smith she will be turning 16 on March 3rd. I would like to say that I miss you and I love very much, you're the best thing that ever happened to me in my life. And I plan to spend the rest of my life with you love always

Patrick.

103 - Anniversaries

Happy first wedding anniversary to Mr & Mrs Waylon Sait on March 10, 2001. From Anita, Calvin and Marina in North Bay. (p.s. Happy birthday, Waylon on March 4/01 Take care)

To my parent, Allan & Eva Kitchen. I want to wish you a happy 40th anniversary. How do you both do it, to stay together for such a long time? It must be "True Love". I wish you many, many more years together. Love always, your daughter, Louise.

203 - wanted

Be a part of history! Rezolution Pictures needs your help for their next documentary. We need to borrow home movies of life in the community. please call 514 272 5659 or send them with your name, address and phone # to: Rezolution Home Movies, box 48036, 5678 Av du Parc, Montreal Qc, H2V 1S6 (Jihnskuumtinan!)

300 - Personals

A special hello to my nephew and nieces in Waskaganish. Redfern, Lindy, Ashlyn and Denise Dawn. I miss you a lot. Oh! Hello to "Choomagun" too. Erica Kane in Wask. I'll come and visit in March. Auntie Anita in N-B

Congratulations to " Miss Princess Waswanipi" Sarah Blacksmith. Its so wonderful to see the Lord

blessing your life in a wonderful way..Keep hoping for the best in everything, trusting in him always, Thank you so verymuch for your wonderful friendship, you are a blessing from the Lord. Also, Congratulations to the Waswanipi youth for a Job well done during the Youth Festival. Keep holding on, one day at a time, Love in Christ, your friend forever, Tom Polson.

To someone in my life that I love so very much (who's from Wask.) I just wanted to tell you that you mean slot to me, and let's try to keep our relationship strong. I never want to lose you because we have our son to think about. I love being close to you, and I never want to let go. Let's stop hurting each other, and start thinking about what makes us happy, our son (M.N. B.B.). One last thing. You and our son are my whole world. I just hope when you read this that it will make you love me more. Love you always (Wask)

400 - Events

PROPOSED REUNION This is a notice to the former students of Mission St. John, Fort George, Quebec. We are in the process of organizing a Reunion this coming summer of 2001.

The date has not been yet determined. In order for the Proposed Reunion to happen, you must contact the following individuals below.

Margaret Sealhunter (819) 855-2833 (w) - leave message Linda Rednose (819) 855-2844 (w) ext.5332 - leave message

Therese Lameboy (819) 855-2833 (w) ext.213

Maggie Cox (819) 855-2878 (w) ext. 352

Mary McKee (819) 855-2833 (w) ext.206

Hey! Listen up, people! We're hosting 2 contests... Who is the Cutest girl, and Who is the Cutest couple in The Cree Nation? Girls must be between the ages of 13-21 yrs old. Tell us why you think she is the cutest, and where she's from. As for the Cutest Couple in The Cree Nation, couples must be between the ages of 13, and up! Tell us why you think they make a cute couple, and where they're from. There is a deadline; votes must be in by March, 31st, 2001.

Send your votes to: cree_heart_breaker@hotmail.com

Oh yeah! We will be sending the results into The Nation, by April. 1st, 2001, so that you guys can see who won the contests!



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INVITATIONAL TRIATHLON

The Mistissini Police Services is pleased to announce
the First Annual Mistissini Police Services Triathlon
will take place in Mistissini on
Thursday and Friday August 2nd and 3rd, 2001

BOTH MALE AND FEMALE CATEGORIES

AGE CATEGORIES	EVENT DISTANCES			FEEES
10 YRS AND UNDER	0.5 K RUN	3.0 K BIKE	0.5 K RUN	\$ 20
11 - 13 YEARS	0.5 K SWIM	15.0 K BIKE	3.0 K RUN	\$ 20
14 - 17 YEARS	0.75 K SWIM	22.0 K BIKE	5.0 K RUN	\$ 50
18 YRS + PARTICIPAT.	0.75 K SWIM	22.0 K BIKE	5.0 K RUN	\$ 50
18 YRS + COMPETITION	1.5 K SWIM	40.0 K BIKE	10.0 K RUN	\$ 100

TOP 5 MALE AND FEMALE ATHLETES IN EACH CATEGORY RECEIVE PRIZES

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